qualify in the Screening Test will be allowed to appear in the Main Examination.

(c) Joint Entrance Examination has a very high credibility in the public. The new scheme will ensure that only a small number of serious candidates who qualify through the Screening Test will be further tested for their analytic ability in a concerted manner. With a very limited number of examination centres, the conduct of the Main Examination will be monitored very closely and effectively. This will, thus ensure that only the best will qualify for the admission to the Indian Institutes of Technology.

Save Higher Education Day

1046. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Universities in the country and their affiliated institutions observed Save Higher Education day on 22nd November, 1999, so as to put the funding crisis being faced in the system on the national agenda, due to continued Government neglect, particularly in the present decade, as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 23rd November, 1999;

(b) if so, what are the demands of Federation of Central Universities Teachers' Association (FEDCUTA); and

(c) what are Government's plans to deal with the above financial crisis, indicating reaction to privatisation of higher education proposal, etc?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The news items published in Hindustan Times dated 23.11.1999 have flagged, inter-alia, issues relating to financial crisis, role of Ministry of Human Resource Development and University Grants Commission in the crisis, merits and demerits of privatisation of higher education, threat from invasion of foreign Universities, accountability of Vice-Chancellors and teachers. These topics have been the subject of discussion since long and were further discussed in seminars organised in various. Central Universities on that day. There have been recommendations on the above issues, interalia, by a Task Force and a Group of Experts which have been submitted to the Government for consideration.